

REMARKS

In response to the October 1, 2007, Office Action in the above-identified application, please accept the following response to the restriction requirement.

Applicants were required to elect a single species to which the claims shall be restricted if no generic claim is finally held to be allowable. The species were listed as follows:

- A) The embodiment as shown in Figs. 3-7 (see also specification at page 8+).
- B) The embodiment as shown in Fig. 8 (see also specification at page 13+).
- C) The embodiment as shown in Fig. 9 (see also specification at page 14+).
- D) The embodiment as shown in Fig. 10 (see also specification at page 16+).
- E) The embodiment as shown in Fig. 11 (see also specification at page 17, 2nd paragraph +).
- F) The embodiment as shown in Fig. 12 (see also specification at page 17, 4th paragraph +).

Applicants respectfully elect species E (the embodiment as shown in Fig. 11). Claims 16 to 18, 22 to 25 and 28 are readable on elected species E.

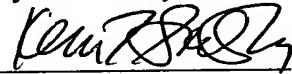
For purposes of examination, Applicants were further required to elect a single subspecies of the longitudinal securing arrangement. Applicants respectfully elect screws as the subspecies, as described in the specification wherein “[t]he feet 89, and therefore the lower ends of the fuel rods 3, are therefore secured longitudinally between the lower member 29 of the end-piece 7 and the upper plate 31, by the screws 43 for fixing to the guide tubes 11.” (Substitute specification, page 16, lines 22-26). Claims 16 to 18, 22 to 25 and 28 are readable on the elected subspecies.

In addition, claim 16 has been amended herein to better clarify the scope of the present invention. No new matter has been added herein, as support thereof can be found in the (substitute) specification at, *inter alia*, page 2, lines 14-16.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that all pending claims of the present application are now in condition for allowance. Prompt reconsideration and allowance of the present application are therefore earnestly solicited.

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Respectfully submitted,
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